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AFGHANISTAN

FACT SHEET

Panjsher Province

OVERVIEW

USAID estimated support for Panjsher from January 2002 - December 2010: \$62.5 million

Estimated population: 137,000 (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Central Statistics Office: Estimated Population of Afghanistan 2008-2009)

Capital: Bazarak

Note: U.S.-led PRT



Panjsher, Afghanistan's most recently created province, is a mountainous area of green valleys, running streams, and high mountain peaks. This province was the home base of Afghan national hero Ahmed Shah Massoud and his militia. Massoud, in cooperation with indigenous intelligence networks, helped make Panjsher the only Afghan region unconquered by the Soviet Union and the Taliban. Panjsher's economy today is driven mainly by agriculture, and irrigation canals feed groves of walnut, mulberry, and almond trees, as well as fields of potatoes, beans, and grapes. The region is also rich in gemstones and there is potential to further exploit the mining of lapis, emeralds, and crystals.

AGRICULTURE

Goal: Increase agricultural-sector jobs and income through a) increased agricultural productivity by increasing farmer access to inputs and effective extension services; b) invigorated agribusiness by increasing linkages between farmers, markets, credit, and trade corridors; and c) rehabilitated watersheds and improved irrigation infrastructure. Also, increase Afghans' confidence in their government by increased Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock's (MAIL) capacity to deliver services and promote the private sector and farmer associations through direct budget and technical assistance.

Summary: USAID focuses on preparing farmers to participate in a modern agricultural economy through improved agricultural inputs, irrigation, veterinary services, market information, and training.

Current Activities:

- Support veterinary field units
- Provide training in dried mulberry and dried apricot production and marketing to build farmers' skills and increase their earning potential
- Plant trees and establish woodlots to enhance natural resource management and improve the livelihoods of rural farmers and their communities
- Provide accessible and affordable agricultural inputs, improved seed varieties and fertilizer, and promote the increased production of wheat while building the capacity of the emerging private-sector seed industry and input supply system

Accomplishments:

- Improved access to irrigation through the construction of three irrigation canals
- Organized a road show to create linkages between Afghan farmers, traders, and the Afghan government, and to provide a venue to discuss activities, challenges, and lessons learned for 300 farmers, herders, and traders as well as government officials and other agriculture stakeholders



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- Supported six private, full-service AgDepot farm stores established by USAID that provide agriculture supplies and services to support key licit crops and animal health
- Trained more than 4,800 goat herders and distributed 1,980 combs and 1,668 radios as part of a cashmere awareness campaign
- Trained 10 para-veterinarians who administer vaccines and other medications
- Distributed 110 metric tons of seed and 300 metric tons of fertilizer through a voucher system, benefitting 2,200 farmers
- Supported eight Veterinary Field Units that vaccinated 337,000 animals, treated 180,000 animals, and generated gross sales of approximately \$180,000
- Brought 58,000 hectares of land under improved natural resource management and trained 12 staff members from the provincial Agriculture Department

DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE

Goal: Build the capacity of government institutions to improve the quality and quantity of public services to Afghan citizens. Support independent media institutions and advocacy groups.

Summary: USAID supports democracy and governance in Panjsher Province through activities including legislative strengthening, electoral support, justice-sector reform, media, and civil-society development.

Current Activities:

- Support seven USAID-established community cultural centers that carry out legal and women's rights awareness programs to promote women's rights
- Support the Radio Khorassan station in Bazarak, Panjsher with program funding and technical support as part of a national network of local radio stations that broadcast independent national satellite programming from Salam Watandar
- Support the Afghanistan Women's Education Center as an intermediate civil-society support organization, which will organize community dialogues, run resource centers, monitor grantees, and provide capacity building to target civil-society organizations
- Train provincial and district-level civil servants in the five common functions highlighted in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy: financial management, human resources management, procurement, project management, and strategy and policy development
- Embed technical advisors in provincial line departments, who provide on-the-job training to civil servants to increase service delivery
- Provide capacity building, training, and small grants to eight Afghan Civil Society organizations showing potential to be sustainable, effective organizations in the province
- Train Provincial Council Members on the council's legal rights, monitoring, and oversight, and getting them to communicate with the constituents and represent them with government entities
- Provide \$25,000/month through the Performance Based Governors Fund for governors to cover operational expenditures and perform community-outreach projects

Accomplishments:

- Supported the development of the justice sector through the publication and distribution of judicial reference laws
- Developed and trained judges and court administrators in the Afghanistan Court Administration System
- Provided core skills and ethics training for judges allowing them to better officiate over the courts



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- Promoted legal and human rights awareness, including women's rights, through public education campaigns in a variety of media, and provided institutional, capacity-building training to civil-society organizations
- Supported the 2010 voter registration update exercise; assisted domestic and international observation missions; trained political parties and candidate poll agents; conducted a series of poll surveys ahead of the 2010 election; and provided civic education and media outreach activities for broad-based participation to promote a democratically-elected government
- Provided training and support to provincial councils, which improved professionalism, knowledge, and skills, resulting in more effective and transparent leadership
- Facilitated consensus-building efforts through civic-education training and dialogue sessions with mullahs and Sharia scholars
- Supported voter registration, assisted domestic and international observation missions, trained political parties and independent poll agents, conducted a series of poll surveys, and supported the 2009 presidential and provincial council elections
- Built a provincial court in the capital and renovated a district administration building in Hese-e-Awali
- Designed and constructed a safety wall, which now prevents drivers from losing control on a particularly dangerous road
- Strengthened Panjsher municipality through training and technical assistance by embedded technical advisors, youth support, landfill feasibility study, technical support in establishing a Strategic Municipal Action Plan, digitized base mapping, and implementing municipal small-scale infrastructure projects

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Goal: Promote a thriving, licit economy led by the private sector.

Summary: USAID promotes a licit economy in Panjsher Province through expanding access to telecommunications, land titling documentation, and modern banking services as well as supporting small and medium enterprises.

Current Activities:

- Promote economic related information and data collection activities in Panjsher Province to build Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) regional economic research and analytical function introduced in DAB zone offices
- Support the revenue reconciliation team of the Panjsher Mustofiat, centered on accurate revenue collection posting and reporting to center
- Promote improved cash management operations with regard to availability and quality of bank notes in circulation

Accomplishments:

- Installed six District Communications Network centers and one Village Communications Network, operated by Afghan Telecom, that provide telephones, Internet, and photocopying services to both the district government officials and the public
- Implemented an automated Core Banking System, provided training for bank staff, and expanded and refurbished the provincial branch of DAB that operates as the paying agent for the government and disburses all social, payroll, and procurement payments (services such as these increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the social and economic infrastructure of Afghanistan, contributing to the development of the public and private sectors)



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- Reorganized land titling documentation at the Makhzan court register with new cost-efficient technology, Afghans can now easily access their property documents (before the reorganization, the land administration office was unable to properly document land transfers, provide proof of ownership documents, or prevent the registration of fraudulent deeds)
- Installed the Revenue Reconciliation and Accounting database in the Panjsher Mustofiat, which has dramatically reduced processing times of Afghan government revenue receipts, production on revenue reports, and uploading into the consolidated Ministry of Finance Financial Management System
- Supported 82 small and medium enterprises through association grants, cooperatives, and business skills training
- Assisted the local gemstone association in the practice of safe mining techniques and improved cutting and polishing practices
- Supported business association development through trainings for associations in the gemstone, agriculture, and food processing sectors including three women's associations that promote the economic empowerment of women

EDUCATION

Goal: Improve the quality of basic education through improved teacher quality and increased availability of primary school textbooks; improve the livelihoods of urban and rural communities through increased literacy and employability instruction.

Summary: USAID supports educational improvements in Panjsher Province through four national education programs. USAID has provided in-service teacher training (INSET), developed in-school teacher support activities (ITSA), provided radio-based teacher support programs, provided support to local communities through capacity strengthening in partnerships with non-government organizations and Ministry of Education personnel, provided literacy and vocational schools training, printed textbooks, and constructed and/or refurbished schools.

Current Activities:

- Continue INSET 2 training for teachers
- Develop Accelerated Learning materials and train trainers
- Conduct school management training 2
- Implement INSET 3 focused on literacy and numeracy for primary teachers
- Provide both face-to-face teaching and radio-based teacher support programs to more than 1,000 teachers and administrators to improve teachers' skills and performance in the classroom
- Train community leaders and village teachers in community mobilization, program management, and functional literacy skills
- Offer the 18-month program in literacy and productive skills to more than 11,050 youth and adults in 126 communities through 440 literacy centers
- Continue textbook support

Accomplishments:

- Established 440 literacy centers
- Trained approximately 1,900 teachers and 75 trainers in INSET training
- Established more than 84 Teacher Learning Circles in 63 schools
- Developed school improvement plans in 79 schools
- Established 83 school management committees



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- Completed 3,823 teacher observations during the project life
- Printed more than 270,000 textbooks
- Established seven school manager practicum groups for 199 school principals
- Constructed four schools

HEALTH

Goal: Improve the access to and quality of health services and increase the abilities of individuals, families, and communities to protect their health.

Summary: USAID's principal health investments in Panjsher Province come through nationwide programs, including support for health and family planning products and provision of refresher training courses for nurses and physicians.

Current Activities:

- Support social marketing of health and family planning products (such as contraceptives, water purification agents, and oral rehydration salts for diarrhea) through 21 private-sector outlets
- Fund the Diseases Early Warning System for 14 routine conditions/diseases in five sentinel sites
- Support the Provincial Public Health Office and the Provincial Public Health Coordination Committee to strengthen the technical, leadership, and management capacity of the provincial health team to support the delivery of the Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) and Essential Package of Hospital Services (EPHS)
- Train Community Health Worker Trainers and Community Health Supervisors and orient new non-government organization staff to expand the use of postpartum family planning

Accomplishments:

- Trained approximately 8,000 pharmacists, shura members, and community-health workers on safe drinking water, oral rehydration salts, and birth spacing to increase the quality of preventative healthcare in the province
- Trained Provincial Health Officers to develop monthly joint monitoring plans to support the delivery of BPHS and EPHS

INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal: Improve infrastructure in order to create licit economic opportunities, promote freedom of movement, and facilitate delivery of government and social services.

Summary: The infrastructure program in Panjsher Province focuses on hydropower, water-supply systems, and road construction and maintenance, while building the capacity of local workers and supporting the provincial economy using locally available materials.

Current Activities:

- Rehabilitate the existing hydropower facility in Anabah District to provide electricity to 9,000 local residents
- Maintain the Panjsher Valley Road to facilitate travel and reduce vehicle operating costs
- Strengthen the capacity of the Provincial Road Maintenance Unit under the Ministry of Public Works to manage road maintenance by Afghan contractors



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- Construct gravity-fed, piped-water supply systems that will provide potable water to residents of Khinj, Anabah, Dara, and Anabah districts

Accomplishments:

- Constructed the Panjsher Valley Road, shortening travel time and increasing access to health care, education, and economic opportunities

STABILIZATION

Goal: Improve stability, extend the reach of the Afghan Government, and promote stabilization efforts that lay the groundwork for medium- to long-term development activities.

Summary: USAID creates linkages and builds confidence between communities and the local government through small-scale infrastructure, training, and community-development projects.

Current Activities:

- Repair an existing 157 meter retaining wall to help resist flooding experienced in the Bad Qual village in Bazarak District
- Rehabilitate 52 meters of a retaining wall for a canal in Tawakh village of Unaba District

Accomplishments:

- Promoted women's rights by sponsoring International Women's Day events
- Supported a road safety campaign to promote safe driving and reduce accidents
- Built the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's capacity to respond to a 2007 flood in Zamankor, Rokha, and Anaba districts
- Provided technical advisors and commodities to the Department of Economy, Department of Public Works, Department of Women Affairs, and the office of the governor
- Supported the Provincial Development Council through capacity-building training
- Trained Provincial Development Council members in participatory planning techniques and media relations
- Offered vocational training such as metalwork, carpentry, motorcycle repair, and beekeeping
- Provided training, equipment, and supplies for 20 farmers to create for-profit fruit orchards, enabling rural villagers to support themselves through licit means
- Conducted micro-hydropower maintenance training for community members to improve maintenance and upkeep on existing micro-hydropower plants